

**ONE HUNDRED SIXTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION - 2020**  
**COMMITTEE STATEMENT**  
**LB563**

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**Hearing Date:** Tuesday February 05, 2019  
**Committee On:** Education  
**Introducer:** Bolz  
**One Liner:** Adopt the Access College Early Tech Promise Program Act

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**Roll Call Vote - Final Committee Action:**  
Advanced to General File with amendment(s)

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**Vote Results:**

**Aye:** 8 Senators Brewer, Groene, Kolowski, Linehan, Morfeld, Murman,  
Pansing Brooks, Walz

**Nay:**

**Absent:**

**Present Not Voting:**

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**Oral Testimony:**

**Proponents:**

Senator Kate Bolz  
Kathy Danek  
Mike Baumgartner  
Greg Adams  
Susan Martin  
Andy Hale

**Representing:**

introducer  
Lincoln Public School Board of Education  
Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education  
Nebraska Community College Association  
AFL-CIO  
Nebraska Hospital Association

**Opponents:**

**Representing:**

**Neutral:**

**Representing:**

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**Summary of purpose and/or changes:**

Legislative Bill 563 establishes the Access College Early Tech Promise Program (ACE Tech Program) to be administered by the Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education (CCPE).

To be eligible for a scholarship under the ACE Tech Program, a student must be:

- Full-time enrolled in a minimum of 12 credit hours per semester or nine credit hours per quarter,
  - Enrolled in an eligible program at any eligible institution,
    - Eligible program means a program of study at an eligible institution that is designed to be completed in two years or less; offers a certificate, diploma, or associate degree that directly qualifies the recipient for employment in an eligible occupation; and is approved pursuant to the designated high priority in-demand occupations as determined by the Nebraska Community College Student Performance and Occupational Education Grant Committee
    - Eligible institution means any Nebraska community college, any tribally controlled community college in Nebraska, or the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture at Curtis,
  - Received postsecondary education credit while in high school for at least two courses in a single career program of study related to an in-demand occupation,
  - Received an Access College Early Scholarship while in high school, or was qualified to receive one but the scholarship was not granted due to insufficient funds,
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- Has applied for federal financial aid through the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) for the applicable academic year,
- Has not previously earned an associate degree, and
- For a student who is applying for an award in a second academic year, has successfully completed the first academic year and maintained the minimum standards of performance required by the enrolled institution.

LB563 directs students to submit applications to the financial aid officer at the eligible institution, who shall make recommendations regarding the eligibility and forward the application to CCPE. CCPE transmits applications to the Committee for approval or denial. Notification of decisions shall be made in writing within 30 days of receipt of the application and recommendation.

An eligible student who is granted an award for his or her first academic year shall be eligible for an award to complete his or her second academic year of the approved program notwithstanding a decision of the Committee to remove the eligible program designation for incoming eligible students.

Scholarship awards for an academic year shall not exceed the sum of tuition and fees plus \$1500 for educational expenses minus any Federal Pell Grants awarded for the academic year. No award shall be less than \$1500. No student shall be granted awards for more than two academic years. Awards shall be forwarded to the eligible institution as payment of tuition and fees, as well as for distribution to students for education expenses. Except as otherwise provided, CCPE may distribute awards pro rata on a term-by-term basis.

LB563 allows students affected by an adverse decision to submit within 20 days a written request for review to the executive director of CCPE, which shall be conducted pursuant to the Administrative Procedure Act.

CCPE is directed to prepare and submit an annual report on the ACE Tech Program electronically to the Clerk of the Legislature.

CCPE may adopt and promulgate rules and regulations related to the ACE Tech Program.

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**Explanation of amendments:**

The Committee considered and adopted AM2526 which substitutes for the bill. It strikes "any tribally controlled community college in Nebraska" from the definition of eligible institution and replaces it with "any not-for-profit, two-year college in Nebraska which is a member institution of an accrediting body recognized by the United States Department of Education". This language continues to include tribal colleges, but opens the class to other qualifying colleges as well.

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Mike Groene, Chairperson